English Presbytery:

OR, AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

Main Opinions

OF THOSE

Ministers and People in ENGLAND,

Who go under the Name of

PRESBYTERIANS.

PUBLISHED

For the *Vindication* of divers *Noble* and *Worthy Persons*, who by *Papists* and their *Adherents* are without any ground aspersed with that Name.

And also *of those* who indeed do hold those Principles; appealing to the Judgment of all sober Christians, what there is of *Falshood* or *Unpeaceableness* in them.

John 5. 4. *Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testifie of me.*

Carpere vel noli nostra, vel Ede tua.

LONDON,

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TO THE
READER.

Good Reader.

THE Presbyterians *being* (*as the* Jewes *ſaid of the* Chriſtians, *Acts* 28. 22.) a Sect every where ſpoken againſt, *and that by many who are ſo far from underſtanding what the* Presbyterians *are, that they can hardly underſtand or* ſpeak common ſenſe: *I thought it might be worth the while in a ſheet of paper to do as much for* Presbytery, *as Dr.* Ames *did long ſince for* Puritaniſm, *to which* Presbytery *is at leaſt a piece of a Succeſſour. That I might* vindicate *thoſe worthy* Noble men *and* Gentlemen *who are thus* aſperſed, (*though wholly of another mind*) *and alſo vindicate thoſe who indeed are ſo from the* Obloquy *and* Reproach *they lie under, with many upon that account. We are come to that height of madneſs that if a man will not* drink healths, *he is a* Presbyterian; *though our Sons of the Church as oft as they do it, violate the* Canons (*I am ſure of one,*) *I think of two* Councils (*never yet null'd by any law of the Nation,*) *if men will not be* drunk *and* Profane *they are again* Presbyterians. *It is not enough for men to own* Epiſcopacy, *to hear* Common-Prayer *conſtantly, to receive the* Sacraments according to our Church. *Unleſs he will ſay in every thing and do in every thing as his* Pragmatical *Neighbour will have him, he is a* Presbyterian. *I have heard that in a late* Election of Parliament-men, *a* Clergy-man *of ſome note uttered in a company of Electors, crying out,* No Popery, No Preſbytery. *The ſober Hearers wondered what he meant, none looking towards* Presbytery, *being in any* nomination *or under any* pretenſions *to the* Election. *That therefore men*

may

may be no longer abuſed with empty noiſes *and* clamours; *Thou ſhalt from this Paper judge who are* Presbyterians, *and have an occaſion offered thee to judge of them what they hold deſerving ſuch a* clamour, *as a company of ignorant perſons make. I have ſometimes been in company (though unknown) where I have heard ſome begin to clamour at this rate. But making this Reply;* That I had often heard Presbyterians revil'd, &c. but cou'd never underſtand, from any who uſed their tongues at that rate, what thoſe perſons were or what they held: deſiring them to inform me: *But could never yet meet with any perſon would favour me with their notion of them. So that it is a perfect* Non amo te *Sabidi*, &c. Reader *I have here told thee what a* Presbyterian *is. If thou beeſt not a* Papiſt, *I doubt not but upon deliberation, thou wilt ſay, ſuch a one may be a much honeſter man then ſome of thoſe who reproach them; and a tolerable Chriſtian, though in ſome things thou, and he are not of a mind. I would have a* Presbyterian *to be one that is able, and ready to give account of his faith clearly to every one that asks him. And if all thoſe of other perſuaſions were ſo too, I think the world of all ſuch as own the Scriptures to be the word of God, and their rule, will quickly be agreed. If ſome have a* latitude *to give to men a further power in the things of God, than others can: they have no reaſon to be angry with thoſe that are more ſtraitned; for we have no reaſon all to cry out againſt the* Pope *for his claim to infallibility if we will not allow that we or any Church may be miſtaken. Farewell good* Reader! *and do but talk of, uſe and treat* Presbyterians *as thou haſt them here deſcribed to thee, and* ſpeak *and do thy worſt; and if thou ſpeakeſt otherwiſe thou doeſt but abuſe thy ſelf by* lying or ſpeaking Evil of the things thou doeſt not know. Presbyterians *are not concerned in thy Railleries.*

English Presbytery,

Concerning the

Fundamental Principles of Difference

BETWEEN

Non-Conformists,

Especially such as are called

Presbyterians,

And Others.

THere are *three fundamental Principles* held by *Non-Conformists* (and those especially of them which are called *Presbyterians*) wherein they differ from others.

1. *That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament* are a *perfect Rule for Christians, directing them not only what to believe in the things of God, but also what to do in all matters relating to the Worship of God, and the Government of the Church; so as in these things they may not either believe or do what is not there expresly, or by immediate consequence revealed.* In Civil matters they believe the Scripture to be only a *general Rule*, or rather as to them, to contain some *General Rules* only, by which all mens actions are to be directed; but in *Sacred things*, they believe the Scriptures to be a *particular Rule*, both as to *Acts*, and *Means*, and *Modes*; so as it is the Will of

 God,

God, that in them nothing ſhould be done but what is there directed; and what is neceſſary to ſuch actions, conſidered as humane acts, and common to them, with all other humane acts, ought to be left at liberty, or ſo commanded, as they may be done without offence to the General Rules of holy Writ, by which all humane acts are to be guided, *viz.* ſo as *God may be moſt glorified, others moſt edified*, and *leaſt ſcandalized*. Thus they differ from *Papiſts*, who will not allow the Scriptures to be a *Perfect Rule* as to matters of *Faith*; and from thoſe, who although they allow them in *matters of Faith* a *Perfect Rule*, yet deny them to be ſo in the *matters of Worſhip*, or *Government of the Church*; and as to the firſt, ſay, That the Scriptures are only a perfect Rule as to *Acts of Worſhip*, not as to *Means*, and *Modes*, or *Religious Rites* uſed in and about the *Worſhip of God*; but that theſe may be directed by Superiours for *Spiritual Edification*; or who ſay, *That the Scripture hath only directed, That the Church ſhould be governed*, but hath left to *Superiours* to determine by what *Officers, Acts and Rules* that *Government* ſhould be exerciſed: So as the firſt and main Queſtion is, *Whether the Scriptures be a perfect and ſufficient Rule for Chriſtians in matters of Worſhip, and Church-Government, as well as matters of Faith?* which thoſe called *Presbyterians* believe it is; becauſe they find *ſufficient Directions* in it for the *decent and orderly performance of all Acts of Worſhip, without any humane ſupplements*, and *ſuch Church-Officers directed* by it, *ſuch acts of Juriſdiction* and *Cenſures* preſcribed in it, as are ſufficient to preſerve the *Unity, Peace* and *Purity* of the *Church*, which are the great ends of that *Government*.

2. Secondly, *That the Ultimate Judgment of the Will of God revealed in Scripture, as to any perſons particular practice, is his own practical Judgment or Conſcience, after a due Enquiry into Scripture, and comparing Scripture with Scripture, and hearing and weighing the Judgments of others, as to things, the believing or not believing, doing or not doing of which, may render his ſoul guilty before God.* And that although a man's Conſcience may err (as any other creature may) yet no Chriſtian ought to act contrary to the dictate of it, whether it dictateth upon probable, or demonſtrative Arguments in *obedience* to any man, but ought rather *patiently to ſuffer* any thing ſhall be impoſed on him for not doing.

3. That where any things in the Worſhip of God are of *neceſſary*

sary use, though they have been abused to the *Worship of Idols*, yet the use of them is to be *retained*, and the *abuse* only taken away; but where the use of any thing in the *Worship of God is not necessary*, if it hath been ordinarily used in an Idolatrous Worship, it ought to be *wholly disused*, especially if it *giveth an offence to any considerable number of Christians*; nor can the commands of any Superiours legitimate the use of any such *Rites*, *Figures*, *Habits* or *Actions*; *Superiours* being obliged in the first place by the will of God not to *command them*; and being as much under the *Royal Law of Love*, as private persons. These are the *Fundamental Principles* of all those truly called *Presbyterians*, from which flow all their different *Apprehensions*, relating to the *Worship of God*, the *Church*, the *Ministers of it*, and the *Ministrations in it*. The *Censures* and *Power of the Keys*, which I shall now more particularly declare.

Concerning Divine Worship.

1. DIvine Worship (so far as it concerneth the outward man) being nothing else but *the homage of the creature paid to his Creator, with respect to his excellency, and as an indication of the more internal homage of his soul*, they can allow nothing as an *Act* or *Mean*, or *Mode* of *True Worship*, under the Gospel, but what *Christ hath prescribed*, or *exemplified*, by himself, or his Apostles, or is justified by some Precepts or Examples in the *New Testament*; Christ having abolished both the *Typical* and *Carnal Ordinances*, by which it pleased God to command his peoples expression of their homage to him under the *Old Testament*. And the *New Testament* mentioning only *Prayer* and *Praise*, *Reading*, *Preaching*, and *Hearing of the Word*, *Administring* and *Receiving Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*; they can allow these, and *these* alone to be the Acts of Worship, unless others can be shewn there.

2. The Word of God directing the *Form and Manner of Receiving and Administring both Sacraments*, they believe they ought to be *administred* and *received* according to *those Forms*, and no others, adding only the *Word* and *Prayer*, and *Praise*, which are general acts of Worship, applicable in the use of any creatures. The Word of God also directing the matter both of *Prayer* and *Preaching*, and prescribing no *Forms of words* for either, but requiring Ministers to study

to

to *stir up their gifts*; and, *as they have received them, so to minister the same.* They believe that Ministers are both to *preach and pray* in the *exercises* of *those gifts*, which God hath given them for that end: and to *administer the holy Sacraments* according to his *direction*, without any unnecessary variation. In keeping close to Christ and his Apostles Precepts and Practice they know they cannot err: But they believe, that varying from it, they must err: Not allowing God the *prerogative*, which every creature challengeth, to prescribe his own homage, and reflecting upon the *Wisdom of Christ*, as if he had not known his Father's will, or *not faithfully revealed it*; and the *Apostles*, as worshiping God in an *imperfect manner*, in the most *pure* and *primitive times*.

3. They believe *that nothing in the Worship of God which is idle, and superfluous, is lawful*, it being too solemn an action to trifle in: And that *nothing can be added by man for Edification*, (the Spirit of God alone being authorized to direct means in order to that end;) and that *no Action, Rite, Figure, Habit, or any thing of that nature can be religiously used, by vertue of any Civil command.* Nor can they understand how *actions* can be done in the *solemn Worship of God* meerly in *obedience to man*, without confounding of things *Civil and Sacred*, and setting up *Adam's posts by God's posts*, and *Adam's thresholds by God's thresholds*; and endangering peoples superstitious apprehensions in a short time (as is abundantly proved by the Popish Worship) that these things are *indeed acts of Worship*, and upon that account *acceptable* unto *God*. So that they have no small apprehension that they less err, who (through ignorance) establish such things as *parts and acts of Worship*, than those who require them to be mixt with true acts of Worship, but require them only under the notion of *acts of homage* and *obedience to men*.

4. More particularly, they do not think any *gestures, forms, actions, figures, habits*, or any such thing not *necessary* from the *light of nature*, or a *Divine Precept*, if they have been ordinarily used in the Idolatrous Worship of the *Papists*, are lawful to be used by them in the Worship of God; because they believe *Papists* most gross *Idolaters*, and find themselves confesling it, upon supposition that there is no *Transubstantiation*. And as God severely forbad the *Jews* all Idolatrous usages in his Worship; so the Apostle determineth the unlawfulness of *Idolatry*: and in this they have the Judgment of *Tertullian* very copiously.

ously. But they otherwise judge of what is of *Divine Institution*, though so abused by Idolaters, and of what hath been used by them as *conveniencies* for *Religious actions*, though no more proper to them, than to such as are civil, such as capacious buildings, &c.

5. They do believe *Preaching* to be the *Explication* and *Application of the holy Scriptures*, in order to *Faith* and *Holiness*, and that it ought to be by *comparing Scripture with Scripture*; and *Reason* working upon *Scripture Principles*; and that those who only discourse *moral propositions*, proving them from meer *natural Principles*, and the *Opinions of Heathen Philosophers*, and the *Testimonies of Men*, are very far from discharging the duty of Ministers in Preaching of the Gospel, as those also who deliver their discourses in a stile and phrase not understood by their hearers, and serving only to please and *tickle* the Ears.

Concerning the Church.

1. THey believe that the term *Church*, in a *Religious sense*, is to be interpreted only by the *Scriptures*, and applyed only to a number of people, whom the holy Scriptures dignifie by that *Title*; and that we had not known the term, but for the Scriptures, as appropriated to a Religious Society.

2. They believe, *that according to the Scriptures, the Church* (most strictly and properly) *signifieth that number of people of whom Christ is the Head*, and *who are his Members*, to whom belong the promises of all spiritual things, and of *Eternal Life* and *Salvation*; and this is the *Church Invisible* (for the *Lord alone* knoweth who are his) part of whom are *in Patria*, their Souls being already with Christ in glory (who are therefore called the Church *Triumphant*) having conquered all their *Spiritual Enemies*; part of them yet *in Via*, in the way towards Heaven; or being chosen of God, are daily coming into that way, in which they have, and shall have the certain conduct of the Spirit of God, until they come to their Journeys end; but, till that time, will be *fighting the good fight*, with the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*, and are therefore called, *The Church Militant*.

3. God alone knowing these, they believe *that all those who have given up their names to Christ, and are baptized in his name*, making an *outward profession of Faith*, in the *Doctrine of the Gospel*, and *Obedience to the Precepts of it*, make up the *Visible Church*, and are in Scripture

called, the *Church*, and *Churches*; and herein they agree with the nineteenth *Article* of the Church of *England*, which truly saith, *That the visible Church of Christ, is the Congregation of the Faithful, in which the pure Word of God is Preached, and the Sacraments duly administred, according to Christ's Ordinance, in all those things that are of necessity requisite to the same.* That the whole number of these scattered over the whole world, make the *Universal Visible Church*, and that the number of these, in any *Nation*, make up the *National Church* of this or that Nation.

4. They believe, that Christ hath appointed *Ministers of the Gospel* for Officers to this *Visible Church*, who may *Preach the Gospel*, and *Baptize* in any parts of it; but can only exercise an *ordinary jurisdiction*, in those particular parts of it over which God hath given them a particular *Oversight* as *Pastors and Teachers*; the exercise of *Acts of Jurisdiction*, requiring a particular knowledge of persons Opinions, Knowledge and Conversation, which no single person can have as to all the Members of the *Visible Church*.

5. They believe, that *Ministers* ought to be made by those that are *Ministers ordinarily*; first *proving* those that desire *that Office*, whether God hath called them to it, by fitting them with his *gifts and graces*, for the performance of the several acts of that Office: Then *solemnly setting them apart to it* by *Fasting*, and *Prayer*, and *Imposition of Hands*; not as a token of their then *receiving the Holy Ghost* (as the Apostles used it) but as a *token of their separation to the work of the Ministry*. In a total corruption of the *Ministry*, or a want of Ministers, they believe that a *faithful people* may *prove* and *set apart* persons to the Ministry; that no Ordinance of God may be lost which he hath given to his Church; so that none to prove their Ministry need run to an *Apostolical Succession* impossible to be satisfactorily made out by the greatest pretenders to it, (which are the Papists) or *pleaders* for it.

6. They believe *persons thus set apart to the Ministry, are fully authorized to Preach the Gospel, and to baptize in any place where they are called to it, and to administer the Lord's Supper, when they shall be fixed in any Congregation, that they may administer it knowingly to persons that are able to discern the Lord's body*; and whose *conversations are such* as they may *charitably* judge them *members of Christ*, who shall not *eat and drink unworthily*; as also authorized to *joyn*

with other Ministers in *setting apart of Persons to the Ministry*, and to exercise *Acts* of *jurisdiction* in their fixed congregations, admonishing the *erroneous*, *ignorant*, and *scandalous*, withholding the *Lords Supper* from them till they give some evidence of their *Reformation*, and casting them out of the Communion of the Church if after *admonitions*, *instructions*, and *patient waiting* they shall at last appear *contumacious*.

7. They believe that Ministers of the Gospel are bound to *pray* and to *preach in the exercise of those abilities*, which God hath given them for the work of the Ministry; and to *administer the Sacraments*, *and acts of Jurisdiction*, *according to the rule God hath set them in his Word*, and no otherwise; for they are *Ministers of Christ*, not of men, and *Stewards of the mysteries* of God *of whom it is required that they should be faithful*, 1 Cor. 4. 2.

8. They believe any number of Christians living in the same City, (so agreeing,) or in the same *Parish*, or *Neighbourhood*, may *call* or *chuse* any persons to be their *Pastor and Teacher*, or *Pastors and Teachers*, who may either singly, or joyntly take the care of such a flock; and perform all Ministerial acts towards them, either meeting in one, or more places for worship, ordinarily; provided such persons be either Ministers before *proved*, *and set apart* to the Ministry, or so *set apart* before they take upon them that Pastoral charge of such People; but we believe no Person can be so called and set apart, according to the rule of Scripture, but he who is *sound in the faith*, *of an unblameable life*, *apt to teach*, *and furnished with abilities both* to *pray* and to *preach*, and that all *callings* of *other persons* ought to be *reversed* and adjudged *Nullities*.

9. Our Saviour having determined Ministers to be the *Salt of the Earth*, and that if the Salt *hath lost its savour*, *it is good for nothing*, *but to be thrown upon the dunghill*: They do believe that he hath left a power, both in the Church, (if there be no Christian Magistrate) and with the *Christian Magistrate* (who is to be a nursing Father to the Church) If any called to or placed in the Ministry, appear to be *Unsound in the Faith*, *scandalous in his life*; *Insufficient for his work*; *Or negligent in the performance of it*; *to admonish* such persons, and in case he reformeth not to remove him from the Ministry, who may for no other cause be removed from it, either by the Magistrate or the Church.

10. They believe *That no Minister can be over more places, than he can discharge his Duty to, and he can reside amongst*; and that all Ministers ought ordinarily to reside with their People, or so near to them, that they may perform the several acts of his Ministry to them, and that he can delegate that trust to no others: Being himself but a delegate from Christ.

11. They do believe *by the Law of Christ, no Minister of the Gospel is Superiour to, or hath further power than another; but* all are equally obliged and authorized to *Pray* and *Preach*, and *Baptize, and to give the Sacrament of the Lords Supper in* that due order, which the Scriptures have prescribed, *&c.*

12. But in regard, That *the Judgment of persons fitness or unfitness for the receiving the Supper of the Lord*, is a *matter of great moment*, they cannot judge it the will of God that it should be left to the *passions* and *Infirmities* of *any single persons*. It being therefore apparently the will of God, that *ignorant persons*, and such as are *scandalous* should be secluded, and so adjudged by all *Reformed Churches*: They do think that the *Judgment* in this case ought to *be by more than one*. Whether (if there be several Ministers in the same congregation) it be done by more Ministers, or by the *Pastor, or Pastors*, with some of the *ablest members* chosen by the rest to assist in that Judgment, they do not think so clear in Scripture, as to contend for; onely they generally judge these two things of *Divine right in* the case, 1. That *a judgment be made to separate the unworthy from the worthy*. 2. *That it be not the Judgment of any single person* but of more, whether *Ministers* or *People*.

13. Because both the *turning out of unfitting Ministers, and the admitting persons into the Ministery*, and *the casting out of any persons, by Excommunication, and the hearing of the complaints of those who shall judg themselves injured by any act of jurisdiction*, be all of them matters of High consequence; They cannot think them fit to be done and finally determined by the *Officers* of any *particular congregation*, but by the Officers of *several Churches*. And if, for order sake, the *Civil Magistrate* (being a Christian) shall please; Or the Officers of several Congregations with the Consent of the Civil Magistrate, shall please in several Precincts to appoint a number of the most *grave and pious Ministers* to judge *as to the casting out of any Ministers*, and to *prove* and *ordain* such as shall be received into the Ministry, and to hear the com-

complaines of any such as judge themselves injured; and if the Magistrate will please to ordain, that one person (as his Commissioner) dignified under what title he please, shall attend such acts in such or such Precincts, and with others judge in the case: The *Presbyterians* have nothing to oppose to it, provided things be fairly transacted, and adjudged, according to the Rules of God's Word in the cause; but judge it a *prudential act*, consonant to reason, and the will of God: But they can allow no *single person* by any *Divine Right*, to have any such power more than other.

14. These being all the things that are purely *Ecclesiastical*, the *Presbyterians* take not themselves to be concerned, whom the *Civil Magistrate* pleaseth to appoint to take care of *Temples*, *Glebes*, and *Houses* or *Tythes*, or other *Revenues given to maintain the Ministry*, or giving *legal investitures in them*, *or hearing causes or questions about them*; they being all *Civil things* within the *Magistrates sphere*; as also what Titles of *Honour* and *Dignity* he will please to bestow upon his Substitutes in such trusts. They judge these things of no religious nature, but such as the Church hath been without in the best times, and may again be without, and yet exist the Spouse of Christ. Nor are they at all concerned whom the *Magistrate* will entrust, and under what *Titles* to *licence Physicians*, *Midwives*, *School-Masters*, *Marriages*, or to take any *profits* relating to such things; they are *Civil things*, and in the Magistrates own disposal, he may do with them what he pleaseth; and *Titles of Honour* are his creatures; he may make what he pleaseth, and distribute them to whom he pleaseth.

15. They do judge there is an Officer of the Church also called a *Deacon*, and though the term in the *Greek* be of larger significancy, yet they conceive the work of this Officer sufficiently described and limited Acts 6. to take *care of the poor*; whose work it is to take care (by the *voluntary alms* of *Christians*) to provide for *the poor* of his particular Church; they do not disapprove, but highly applaud the care of the *Magistrate* in appointing civil *Officers* and giving them a *legal* power to make *equal rates* for this end: but they say this *Law was* made for the *hardness* of *mens hearts*, for would people do their duty the poor of every congregation might (and that more acceptably to God) be provided for by the due care of the *Officers of Churches*, and the free *contributions of people*; when ever they meet together

to

to worship God, and the *Civil Magistrate* eased of the great burthen he hath upon him in that particular.

Of the Censures of the Church.

1. THey know no *Censures of the Church*, but *Admonition*, *Suspension* and *Excommunication* or Rejection: or as some delight rather to speak, *Admonition*, and the greater and lesser *Excommunication*.

2. For *Admonition* they say there is a *Brotherly Admonition*, which is a *charitable* act whereby one *Private Christian* reproveth his Brother, not *suffering sin upon him*. 2. A *Pastoral Admonition* which is the *Act of the Minister*, admonishing any under his charge, of any errors; which hath more authority in it than the other. 3. *An Admonition, which is a Church censure*, and is the *Act* of the whole *Congregation*, or the Officers of it as well in the name of Christ, as in their names, shewing a person, offending, his error from the word of God, and *exhorting*, and *warning him to* reform it. This they say may be often repeated.

3. They say a person under this censure ought not to be allowed all the priviledges of the Church, but to forbear the *Holy Supper* till he hath given some evidence of his *repentance*, and *reformation* satisfactory to the Congregation.

4. *Excommunication* being the highest censure, they believe ought not be denounced *by any persons, but those whom Gods Word hath appointed thereunto*, nor *for any crimes, but what the Word of God directs, nor in any other manner than it directeth*. The persons decreeing it must be the *Church*, by it's *Officer* or *Officers*, (they agreeing thereunto; for in vain is that person attempted to be cast out of the communion of a *Church*, with whom the members of that Church will have a communion) *The crimes expressed in Scripture* are *pertinacious* continuance in *heresy*, and scandalous living after *reiterated admonitions* and *patient expectation of Reformation*. As *to the manner*, the Scripture directs it to be done *in meekness*, after *much waiting*, and all due means used in order to *Reformation*. They do believe that all other *Excommunications* are but abuses, and like the Mad-man's throwing about *Fire* and *Darts*.

5. *Hearing the Word and Prayers, being Religious Acts*, to which *Heathens* and *Publicans* may be *admitted*, as designed for the *conversion*

sion or *Reformation* of Sinners, they do believe that Persons *Excommunicated* ought by the *Divine rule* to be admitted unto them, being persons, who by the Apostles rule ought still to be *admonished as Brethren*, not *accounted as enemies*. 2 Thes. 3. 15, 16.

6. When Persons are *Excommunicated*, the *Church* can proceed no further, and have nothing to do, but to pray for them, and the particular members privately to *admonish them*, but they are still as *Men* and *Subjects* under the power of the Civil Magistrate if they commit, or persist in any crimes under his cognizance.

Concerning the Civil Magistrate.

1. THey do with all thankfulness to God, *own* and *Revere* his Ordinance of *Civil Magistracy*, and are so far from encroaching upon it. That they believe no Minister of the Gospel ought to imploy himself in it. But to give up himself to *Meditation* and *Prayer*, and the *meer spiritual oversight* of the flock of Christ committed to him.

2. For the *due form of Government*, *or power of Governours in any Nation*, they believe *Gods word hath fixt no universal Rule*, onely confirming the *just Laws* of Kingdoms and *Polities*, and they believe it their duty to be obedient to such *Governours* in all places, as the laws in that place have established, and in the exercise of such power as those laws have given them. From the obedience to which no person upon the account of Religion can pretend to an immunity, and in the exercise of which no Magistrate ought by any to be resisted.

3. But they believe it their duty, onely actively to *obey Magistrates in such things, which are not contrary to the Law of God*, and whether they be contrary or no, (as to their own practice) they conceive their own *consciences must be judges*; and as to such things they conceive themselves onely obliged to suffer *the penalties* for such disobedience peaceably. In short they acknowledge themselves bound to obey the Magistrate legally commanding in all things, wherein (so far as they are able to judge) the word of God saith to all. *Do it not.*

Concerning

Concerning Matters of Faith.

IN all matters of Faith. The Presbyterians believe whatsoever is in the *Apostles Creed*, the *Nicene Creed*, the *Confessions* of Faith of the *Churches of God* in *Switzerland*, *Holland*, *France*, *Geneva*; The *Articles of Ireland*, our own 39 *Articles* (with exception onely to the *Articles* concerning the *Ceremonies* and *Discipline*. And defy the Doctrines of *Papists*, *Socinians*, *Pelagians*, *Semi-Pelagians* and all others erring from the Faith.

From this paper we trust our Countrymen will understand: That the Principles of those called *Presbyterians* (in the strictest notion of the term) are no such things, but very good, and honest men may own, and the briskest tongues and pens of their Adversaries will not be very forward to evince either to be *uncreditable*, or *irrational*.

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